2001 BASE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

"We are pleased that the state is starting to incorporate results of California Standards Tests into the Academic Performance Index (API)," _____(district)_____ Superintendent said today when he/she reported the Internet posting of the 2001 Base API for each school in the district.

The 2001 Base APIs include results from the California Standards Test in English-Language Arts (CST ELA), which was given in spring 2001. Previous APIs had relied solely on results from the national, standardized norm-referenced Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (Stanford 9). The 2001 Base API determines the targets for the spring 2002 testing and provides new school rankings.

"The California Standards Tests, that are an important part of the state's annual STAR Program for grades two through 11, are aligned to state content standards for all subjects tested," _____ noted. "It is extremely important that these standards-based results and other indicators of student achievement be used in API calculations to provide a more comprehensive picture of the academic performance of our students."

For a typical elementary or middle school (grades 2 through 8), results from the CST ELA will now constitute 36 percent of the API and for a typical high school (grades nine through eleven), they will constitute 24 percent of the API. The remainder of the API will consist of results from the Stanford 9.

Over the next few years, the API will incorporate other California standards tests as well as the California High School Exit Examination. Both of these state testing programs address standards that describe the knowledge and skills that are to be taught in California classrooms. Eventually, the API will include graduation and attendance rates.

Superintendent _____ noted that comparisons between the 2001 growth API, released last fall, and the 2001 Base API cannot be made. "With the addition of new data in the calculations, any comparisons would be totally inappropriate," he/she said.

In fall 2002, schools that meet their 2001–02 API growth targets and make at least five points growth (four points for all numerically significant subgroups) will be eligible for consideration for API-based awards programs. Schools that fail to meet their growth targets and receive a 2001 API statewide rank of 1 to 5 will be invited to participate in the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP).

"Schools in our district have an estimated _____ English learners whose primary language is other than English." _____ explained. "These students must take the Stanford 9 and California Standards Tests in English, and these results also are included

in API calculations. As our English learners become more proficient in English, they will increase their performance on these tests. This, in turn, will help raise the academic performance of the schools where they attend," _____ said.

The API is the cornerstone of the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA-Senate Bill 1X), a Governor Gray Davis-sponsored bill signed into law in April 1999. This law authorized the establishment of the first statewide accountability system for California public schools. The system includes three major components: the API, the II/USP, and the Governor's Performance Award program.

The purpose of the API is to measure the academic performance and progress of schools. It is a numeric index that ranges form a low of 200 to a high of 1000. The 2001 API establishes this year's baseline for a school's academic performance and sets an annual target for growth. The state has set 800 as the API score that schools should strive to meet.